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## Information from your Patient Aligned Care Team

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# Cue-Prompted Relaxation

In cue-prompted relaxation, you use a “cue” to remind you to relax. The cue may be an internal or external cue.

### Internal Cues

An example of an internal cue might be a symptom of stress you are experiencing. There are several different types of internal cues, such as:

- **Physical symptoms:** tight muscles, feeling hot, stomach hurting, etc
- **Emotional symptoms:** feeling angry, frustrated, anxious, etc.
- **Behavioral symptoms:** snapping at others, clenching fist, driving too fast, etc.

Whenever you notice one of your internal cues, it is a signal for you to relax; perhaps by taking a slow deep breath, checking your muscles for tension, or saying something supportive to yourself.

### External Cues

An external cue is some outside thing or event that reminds you to relax throughout the day. The cue is not related to a particular symptom of stress, but rather is a reminder to take a minute to make sure stress is not building up. A good cue to use is something that occurs at least a few times per day, but not constantly. The best cue for you will depend on your circumstances, but examples of possible external cues to use might be:

- The phone ringing
- A reminder sticker on a mirror
- Moving from one task to another
- A commercial on TV
- Looking at a watch or clock

Whenever the prompt occurs, scan your body for tension, relax your muscles, and take a slow, deep breath. Do this whether you feel like you need to or not. If you make this a regular habit, you will find that tension does not build up in your body and mind as much as it did in the past.

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### **Follow-up**

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Whichever type of cue you choose, it is important to follow-up and use the cue each time it occurs. In this way, taking a few seconds to check for tension and relax will become a healthy habit.

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### **Practice**

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Let's practice and have you choose an external and an internal cue as reminders to relax.

External cue: \_\_\_\_\_

Internal cue: \_\_\_\_\_